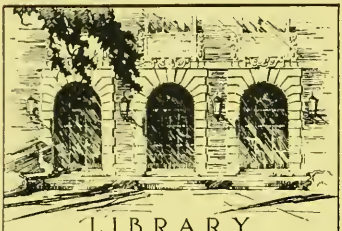

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CHARGE

DELIVERED TO

THE CLERGY

OF THE

DIOCESE AND JURISDICTION

OF GIBRALTAR,

At the Visitation,

HELD IN THE

ENGLISH COLLEGIATE CHURCH OF ST. PAUL, MALTA,

DECEMBER 28, 1844.

BY

GEORGE, LORD BISHOP OF GIBRALTAR.

SECOND EDITION.

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TO

THE CLERGY

OF THE

DIOCESE AND JURISDICTION OF GIBRALTAR,

This Charge

IS INSCRIBED,

WITH FEELINGS OF FRATERNAL REGARD,

BY

THEIR FAITHFUL FRIEND AND BROTHER,

G. GIBRALTAR.

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CHARGE,

&c.

Reverend and Beloved Brethren,

It has been for a long time the custom in the Church of England that its Bishops in their Episcopal visitations should address their Clergy in the way of advice and direction, and that they should give their own views upon any topics of importance which may occupy the attention of the Church at large, or of their own diocese in particular. This custom has been found in many respects beneficial both to the clergy and to the people; and it ought therefore not to be neglected in any case without good and sufficient reason. In our own case, if I have not complied with this custom so soon as might have been expected, it has not been from any unwillingness on my part, but from the difficulty of assembling any considerable number of you together, and from other circumstances pecu-

liar to the diocese and jurisdiction over which I have been called in the providence and mercy of God to preside.

The erection of a new Episcopal See, and the establishment of a new spiritual jurisdiction, are at all times subjects of too much importance to be dealt with in a hasty or cursory manner. But in our own case there are circumstances which seem to demand more than ordinary care and circumspection.

Let me then endeavour to take a survey of our position, and to trace the steps by which we have been brought into it; and if in so doing I should seem to dwell on things which are perfectly familiar to you and to the Church at home, or on things which are external rather than spiritual, you will easily understand the reason of it, on considering the ignorance and the misconceptions which still prevail respecting us.

We now no longer present ourselves to the notice of the Churches in the countries of the Mediterranean as isolated chaplains or missionaries, but as a regularly organized diocese of the Church of England.

We wish them to know that we are a portion of that branch of Christ's Church which was planted in Britain in Apostolic times, and which has ever since continued to exist through a regular succession of bishops and clergy to the present day.

History tells us that the first Churches of Britain, namely, the British, Scotch, and Irish, were originally independent Churches, free from all foreign jurisdiction. But after Britain had been conquered by the pagan Saxons in the sixth century, and after these heathen ancestors of ours had been converted to Christianity chiefly through the zeal of Roman missonaries, sent by pope Gregory the Great, our Churches became all by degrees subject to the Church of Rome. This subjection afterwards became a grievous bondage, which continued through the whole period of darkness in the middle ages till the dawn of the reformation. At that period the spirit of resistance, which had occasionally manifested itself for centuries before, became sufficiently strong to enable the nation to throw off the yoke. Accordingly in the reign of Henry VIII. after much deliberation it was agreed, first by the bishops and clergy in their synods, next by the monastic orders, and finally by the parliament, "that the bishop of Rome has not, in the word of God, any greater jurisdiction in the realm of England than any other foreign bishop."

You are aware that this abolition of the pope's jurisdiction in England is commonly represented in these countries as an act of separation from the unity of the Catholic Church. But it is quite clear from the words of the act of parliament by which the jurisdiction of the see of Rome was abolished,

that neither the authors of that act, nor the people of England had any such intention. They expressly say, that they do not intend by this act "to decline or vary from the congregation of Christ's flock in any things concerning the very articles of the Catholic faith of Christendom, or any other things declared by the Holy Scripture and the word of God necessary for your and their salvation."

It is true that this separation from jurisdiction was followed by excommunication on the part of Rome, and by various acts of the two Churches, the result of which has been a complete separation from Communion, which continues to the present day. But it is not true that the Church of England has ever separated itself from the unity of the Catholic Church. And it was not in the power of the bishop of Rome to cut us off from that unity for having rightly renounced his jurisdiction.

One of the most important acts on the part of the Church of England, after its separation, was the reformation of its public worship. The main principles upon which our reformers proceeded were these two, which are embodied in our articles: (1) That every particular or national Church hath authority to ordain, change, and abolish ceremonies or rites of the Church, ordained only by man's authority, so that all things be done to edifying. (2) That "it is a thing plainly repugnant to the

word of God and the custom of the primitive Church, to have public prayer in the Church, or to minister the sacraments, in a tongue not understood by the people."

Acting on these principles, the ancient ritual was purified from its corruptions and superstitions, and our present forms and services were established.

The Church of England having thus succeeded, not without the blood of martyrdom, in establishing its own independence and its own ritual, it became a matter of necessity that its members residing in foreign countries should have its ordinances administered to them by clergy of their own. For this purpose chaplains were occasionally appointed in different places: but no systematic attempt seems to have been made to provide for the spiritual wants of these outlying members of the Church till the reign of Charles I. In that reign archbishop Laud, whilst bishop of London, was not only zealous for the establishment of chaplains abroad, but was anxious to place them under episcopal superintendence. With this view he obtained orders in council by which these chaplains were placed under the jurisdiction of the see of London.

This arrangement, which was perhaps the best that could have been made at that time, was destroyed in the convulsions which followed, but was restored at the restoration. And thus it is, that

those colonial and foreign Churches and congregations which have no local English bishop, have continued under the jurisdiction of the bishop of London till the present day.

Considering the past operation of that arrangement with regard to yourselves, we cannot but feel deeply indebted to that most able and excellent prelate who now fills the see of London, for the great care and attention which he always showed towards the Churches and congregations dispersed in the countries of the Mediterranean; especially when we remember, that this was done in the midst of those multifarious and overwhelming labours which were pressing so heavily on him in his own diocese. But it had long been obvious to every one acquainted with the subject, and to none more so than to that eminent prelate himself, that the spiritual interests of our Church in these parts of the world were such as to demand the presence and superintendence of a resident bishop; and accordingly, one of the earliest endeavours of the episcopal committee at home, was to find means for supplying this deficiency. With this view a representation was made to the crown by the Archbishop of Canterbury as the metropolitan, and by the bishop of London, as the prelate to whose jurisdiction the congregations belonged, to the effect, that the evils complained of might in some degree be remedied by the erection of a bishop's

see at Gibraltar. And upon this representation the diocese and jurisdiction, of which you form a part, has been constituted and erected.

You are now therefore to consider yourselves a legitimate portion of the province of Canterbury, and are to be governed by the same ecclesiastical laws as the rest of that province. By virtue of my consecration and oath of obedience I am subject to the Archbishop and to the metropolitical see of Canterbury; and in Her Majesty's letters patent the mode of this subordination is declared to be, "in the same manner as any bishop of any see within the province of Canterbury in our kingdom of England is under the said metropolitical see and the Archbishop thereof."

I feel myself bound, therefore, to administer the ecclesiastical affairs of my diocese and jurisdiction according to the same laws and principles as the dioceses in England, making the necessary allowance for the different circumstances in which we are placed.

With reference to matters of corrective discipline among the clergy, it is right that I should state for your information, that in cases relating to offences against the laws ecclesiastical, it will be my duty to be guided by the provisions of the Act of the 3rd and 4th of Queen Victoria, commonly called the Church Discipline Act. That Act, strictly speaking, does not extend its enactments

to the colonies and dependencies: but I am required by the terms of Her Majesty's letters patent to proceed according to the ecclesiastical laws of England. And with reference to any sentence or decree of mine in such cases, it is also provided by the same letters patent, that an appeal may be made to the Archbishop of Canterbury, who is empowered finally to decide.

With regard to the duties of chaplains, and to their entering or leaving the Diocese or any part of the jurisdiction, the same general rule which prevails in England is to be observed, namely, that every clergyman coming from another diocese shall bring the usual letters testimonial signed by three beneficed clergymen; and that no clergyman shall be licensed or admitted to the performance of any of the duties of a chaplain or assistant chaplain without such letters or testimonials.

But in all cases, if a clergyman shall bring me a letter commendatory from his former diocesan, it will not be necessary for him to bring letters testimonial from any other person. I also strongly recommend to all clergymen coming to the countries of the Mediterranean, to bring with them letters commendatory from their diocesan: and if they shall have resided and done duty for a period of six months and upwards within my diocese or jurisdiction, it will be requisite for them, on leaving it, to procure from me a *benè discessit*

or a letter commendatory to their diocesan in England.

I will now turn to matters of a more spiritual nature.

In calling your attention to the duties which devolve upon you as ministers and stewards of the mysteries of God, my thoughts have been fixed upon that text of St. Paul: "It is required in stewards that a man be found *faithful*." The Apostle here lays down a principle applicable to the whole of your active duties. When you call to mind the importance of the charge which is entrusted to you, it will be immediately seen that one of the first requisites of a Christian pastor is *faithfulness*. It is your duty to exhibit this faithfulness in every part of your work: to feed carefully and diligently the souls of those who are committed to your care with the spiritual food which is convenient for them: to watch, to exhort, to reprove with all fidelity: to preach the word in season and out of season, and to declare unto them the whole counsel of God. St. Paul charged the presbyters of the Church of Ephesus that they should "take heed to the flock over whom the Holy Ghost had made them overseers, to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." And so the Church of England charges you through her bishops, in that impressive service by which you were made ministers and

stewards of the mysteries of God, to "have always printed in your remembrance how great a treasure is committed to your charge. For they are the sheep of Christ, which he bought with his death, and for which he shed his blood." It tells you that "the Church and congregation, whom you serve, is his spouse and his body. And if it shall happen that the same Church or any member thereof shall take any hurt or hindrance by reason of your negligence, ye know the greatness of the fault, and also the horrible punishment which will ensue."

If then, my brethren, you do keep these things "printed in your remembrance," it will be impossible for you to be unfaithful to your charge. Whatever defects you may otherwise have to regret in the discharge of your duties, you will at least not be found unfaithful; and you may be assured, that if faithful, you will in the end reap the reward of your fidelity. Generally speaking, you will find your present reward in the respect and love of those who are committed to your charge—a reward on which every true pastor sets a high value. But whether you receive that good return for your labours or not, you may confidently look to the end of them, for that rich reward which the Righteous Judge and Chief Shepherd shall give to his faithful servants at his appearing: for then "they that are wise shall shine as the

firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever."

One point which I wish to press upon you and upon the attention of the clergy generally, is the religious education of the children and young persons in your flocks.

I need hardly tell you that this is a thing which is especially needful under our present circumstances. It is truly painful to observe so much carelessness and ignorance of spiritual things among our countrymen who are scattered abroad, and the almost total want of knowledge of the principles of their own Church which prevails even among persons who make strong professions of religion. It is needful therefore, not only that the young should be well instructed, according to the ordinary routine in their Catechism and in the elementary parts of religion, but also that their instruction should be carried on to a much greater extent. In the first place, they should be brought early to a full and accurate knowledge of the Holy Scriptures. Thus the basis of all true knowledge will be well and truly laid, and the minds of the youthful disciples of Christ will be early imbued with the wisdom which cometh down from above, and they will be made wise unto salvation.

But it is necessary also that they should be instructed in the duties and privileges which belong to them as members of the Church of England.

They should be taught what are its peculiar doctrines and precepts, and made to understand its value as compared with those of other communities. Without this we can never expect to find our flocks sound in the faith and animated with a true and trustworthy love for their Church. We must take care that their zeal be of a truly enlightened character, based upon knowledge and principle. We shall then see less of that indifference to the principles of the Church which we now see, and which arises for the most part from ignorance and want of instruction. We shall cease to hear men speaking with unconcern of one Church being as good as another, and of changing from one communion to another, upon every slight pretence, as they would change their houses, or enter into any new secular society.

Let your people be taught their duty to their own Church thus carefully and affectionately when young, and when they are old they will not depart from it. They will not forsake it either for the seductions of that modern sentimentalism, which leads men to overlook spiritual corruptions and abominations on account of the fascinations with which they are clothed; or in order to follow their own headstrong fancies in regard to the constitution and government of the Church of God.

With regard to the mode of discharging exter-

nally your ministerial functions, I have to enjoin you to observe the greatest care and attention, even in what may be considered the minuter parts of your duties. It is, as you well know, the precept of the Apostle, "Let all things be done decently and in order." And if this be requisite under all circumstances, it is especially so in yours; because you are continually exposed to unfriendly, if not to hostile observation from those around, and because it is your duty to do every thing that you can to conciliate the good opinion of those among whom you dwell, in favour of that simpler and purer form of worship which is established in our own branch of the Church of Christ. I have had many opportunities, in the course of my journeys, to observe the happy effect produced upon members of other Churches by the solemnity of our services; and I am desirous to see these effects extended and enlarged.

Yet let it not be supposed that I would dwell too much upon this point, or would wish to encourage anything like that spirit which we so justly condemn in others, of endeavouring to captivate the minds of weak persons of other communions by the external splendour of ritual observances. Happily the simplicity of our worship is an effectual barrier to any such temptation here, and there can be no room for apprehension on that head, But I think that we ought at least

to strive that our services may be so carried on abroad as to bear a favourable comparison with those of our best churches at home. And in order that I may not be misunderstood I will add, that I do not by this term mean those churches in which innovations have been made which have formed the subject of contention and of complaint; but simply those in which the services have usually been best conducted, without reference to modern innovations. It is my special wish to guard against the evils arising from these, or from innovations of any kind which may serve to stir up strife: but we must not on that account be deterred from attempting obvious and desirable improvements, nor from resuming laudable customs which are not liable to that objection.

I have observed with much satisfaction that there is a growing attention among us, in this and in other places, to the duty and privilege of praising God in his sanctuary. And I have had repeatedly to offer my thanks to members of the laity for the zeal with which they have assisted in the cultivation of psalmody and other music of the Church. But there is still much to be done in this respect before our singing generally in all places can be considered as upon a level with that which exists in our best churches at home, or as affording a specimen of what our services ought to be; I therefore recommend this point to

the special attention of the clergy throughout my jurisdiction.

It may reasonably be expected, that in the actual state of the Church of England I should not pass over in silence the principal questions on which it is at present agitated. And I have less reluctance than I should otherwise have had to enter upon these subjects, from the knowledge which I already possess, that the view which I have taken of those points is one which is likely to be generally acceptable to you. Happily for us, my Reverend Brethren, we have hitherto had no serious differences of opinion among ourselves upon these points, though there have not been wanting those who would fain have excited or inflamed them. I trust therefore that the observations which I have to offer to you may have the effect of strengthening you in that moderation which you have hitherto maintained, and of drawing us closer to each other in the bonds of peace and love.

On looking back to the state of the Church of England for some time before the commencement of the present agitation, it is impossible to deny that there was very much in it which required correction and amendment. The cold secular spirit which afflicted all the Churches during the greater part of the last century still overshadowed a large portion of the clergy ; whilst among the

laity, the strong attachment to the Church which was still visible, was deeply mingled with political considerations, and therefore liable to be overthrown in the changes which were working in our secular institutions. The strong but irregular manifestations of piety and zeal which had sprung up from time to time within her bosom had unhappily been so treated, that they had ended either in the formation of different communities of dissenters, or in giving to pious men within the Church sympathies which were with those communities, rather than with their own brethren and their own rulers. I cannot now stay to consider particularly where the blame of this state of things should be made to rest, but I am quite willing to allow, that a considerable share of it is to be attributed to the mismanagement of the rulers of the Church in the times to which I refer. I am well aware that no human power or wisdom can wholly prevent divisions from arising in any Church. There always were and there always will be "murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts." And "these be they who separate themselves;" being, as St. Jude says, "sensual, and not having the Spirit." But these are few in number, even among those who have actually separated themselves from our communion, as compared with the pious and well-disposed, whose estrangement has always been to me a subject of

the greatest sorrow and regret, and for whose return it is impossible for us not constantly to yearn. In my view, the great practical error of our Church has always been, in leaving many of the most zealous of its children to become a prey to those who create divisions, by not affording scope for the employment of their zeal within its own pale. This is an error which unhappily has become more difficult to remedy since the developement of those extreme views which I shall shortly have to notice. These seem to shut out all hope for the present, both with regard to the English dissenters and Continental protestants; nevertheless I do not at all despair of seeing the greater portion of those, who have been separated from us by the operation of these causes, brought back again to us by the progress of events and the working of a better system.

That a better state of things had commenced, and had been some time at work before the beginning of our present agitations, seems to me undeniable. There were many pious and zealous men among us, who had been strenuously labouring to bring into greater prominence the great doctrines of the Gospel, in conjunction with the order and discipline of the Church. New churches had been built in considerable numbers, and large accessions to us had also taken place from the dissenters. I cannot, therefore, accede to the opinion of those

who attribute to the movement which afterwards sprung up at Oxford, the first commencement of this better state of things. Still it must be allowed that much remained to be done: and thankful ought we to feel to all who were willing in a right spirit to undertake it.

The chief objects which the originators of this movement appear to have proposed to themselves were these: to bring into greater prominence the view of the Catholic Church of Christ as a Divine institution, and the privileges and duties of the Church of England as an integral portion of that Church; to bring forward the claims of the clergy as the ministers and stewards of the mysteries of God and the authorized instructors of his people; to elevate the doctrine of the Sacraments, and bring them into more efficacious use; and to add to the solemnity of the public worship of God, by a strict adherence to the prescribed rules, and an increased attention to the ritual of the Church.

These, I say, were the principal objects proposed: and to these, generally speaking, I think there could have been no reasonable objection on the part of any faithful and well instructed member of the Church of England. For myself, I am ready to say that I should have rejoiced to have seen these views brought to a successful issue, had they been unalloyed by other things which accompanied them. But there were from the very be-

ginning several practical errors mixed up with the views of the leaders of this movement, which destroyed the confidence with which they might otherwise have been regarded by the sound and sober-minded portion of the Church.

One of these was a tendency to exalt tradition unduly, by placing it almost on a level with the written Word of God. Another was the contempt of the ordinary standards of theology in their own Church, and the practice of resorting to the theologians of the middle ages, or to modern Roman Catholic authors, for their phraseology and for their views of the doctrines and principles of the catholic Church of Christ. Another error, arising evidently out of the latter, was the contemptuous and inexcusable treatment which was shewn in some well known instances towards the reformers and the Reformation. I agree entirely in the opinion which has been frequently expressed, that such conduct is totally inconsistent with the character and profession of any member of the reformed Church of England. It has not unnaturally thrown a doubt over the honesty and good faith of all who have taken this view of the Reformation. This doubt has been greatly increased by the very culpable manner in which those articles of the Church, which were opposed to the Romish doctrines, have been treated in the 'Tracts for the Times' and similar publications. And it has been

still farther increased by the falling away of some of the more ardent of those who have embraced these views, and by their joining themselves to the errors and corruptions of the Church of Rome.

I confess that this defection, though painful and injurious, does not appear to me to be of a nature which should cause any serious alarm. In point of number it is at present hardly worth naming. In this diocese and jurisdiction all that we have lost by proselytism of the most indefatigable kind, has been more than made good by those who have come over to us without any such efforts on our part. And I have no doubt whatever, from my former inquiries into this subject, that the same might be said of all the dioceses at home. Every where we have, I feel assured, gained much more than we have lost.

Still it is not to be denied that this defection is a grievous and painful thing, both on account of the spiritual welfare of the persons themselves, and on account of the effects which it has upon our external relations. It serves on the one hand to excite exaggerated hopes in the Roman Church, and on the other it renders it more difficult to stem the torrent of evils with which we are constantly threatened from the other extreme.

Time will not allow me to enter more largely into the various evils, both doctrinal and practical, which have sprung from the agitation of these

questions; but I must not omit to notice one or two practical points by way of remedy and of precaution. In the first place, let me charge you all, and especially my younger brethren, so to direct your studies, as to place all of them in entire subordination to the written Word of God. Let the authority of the fathers, the decisions of the councils, and in short all human authority, be made subordinate and auxiliary to the only supreme and infallible authority, the inspired Word, the revealed and written will of the Great Head of the Church.

Next to that, let me commend to your attention the diligent study of the Book of Common Prayer and the Offices of the Church—not as they have been too much studied of late, to see how they can be made to speak the language of party on the one side or the other, but as containing the authorized views of the Church, to which it is your duty to subscribe and to submit. And this study will not be without its effect, even in what is usually considered a secondary and inferior point, but which must now be deemed a subject of much importance, namely, style and manner of expression. To this point I think that much attention is required. I have already intimated my opinion, that many of the evils which have flowed in upon us, have arisen partly from the style which has been adopted by the promoters of the present

movement. Let me then exhort you to avoid this practical error; to shun foreign and exaggerated sentiments, and to adhere, as closely as you can, to that rich and clear, that truly evangelical style and tone of expression which prevails throughout our public services, imbued as they are with the spirit of Gospel truth, and full of the beautiful language of our invaluable English Bible.

The compilers of our public Liturgy have told us very clearly, in the Preface to the Prayer Book, what was the point at which they aimed, both in regard to style and to the edification of the people. "You have here," say they, "an order for prayer and for the reading of the Holy Scriptures, much agreeable to the mind and purpose of the old fathers, and a great deal more profitable and commodious than that which of late was used:" namely, the Roman breviary, according to the various 'uses' which prevailed at that time in the different dioceses in England. "It is more profitable, because here are left out many things, whereof some are untrue, some uncertain, some vain and superstitious: and nothing is ordained to be read but the very pure Word of God, the Holy Scriptures, or that which is agreeable to the same; and that in such a language and order as is most easy and plain for the understanding both of the readers and hearers."

In this judgment of the compilers of our public

Liturgy, I heartily and entirely concur. And I trust that none of you will ever be led, by any fanciful love of medieval antiquity, into the error of going back even in wish or desire to that miserable state of things from which our reformers, with the blessing of God, then rescued us. It required a mighty and long-continued effort, to shake off the vast load of superstition and error which weighed down the mind and heart of the people: and we should be unworthy of those great and holy men who shed their blood to effect it, were we lightly to esteem the advantages which they purchased for us. The return to the faith and order of the primitive Church; the translation of the Bible, and the right of its free use restored to all the people—a right of which no human power can justly deprive them; the reformation of the public services of the Church, and the celebration of them in a language understood by the people:—these were objects of immense importance. They have led to results of the greatest moment to the Church of England, and they seem to me to be destined to produce hereafter still more extensive effects upon the whole Catholic Church of Christ. They were dictated, under the guidance of God, by those practical principles of common sense, which are generally considered to be characteristic of the English people, and they must in the end commend themselves to the common sense of the whole people of

Christendom. The time is assuredly coming, and coming fast, in spite of all the efforts to retard it, when other national Churches, which are yet unreformed, will demand similar advantages for themselves. They will free themselves from foreign domination; they will return to the doctrine and order of the primitive Catholic Church; they will not be satisfied till they have recovered the free use of the Word of God; till they are able to say of the Holy Scriptures, as the people said of the inspired Apostles at the day of Pentecost, "We do hear them speak in our own tongues the wonderful works of God;" or till they can say with St. Paul, in repudiating the use of prayers in a language not understood by the people, "I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also." Of the existence of such feelings in the bosoms of other Churches I have had sufficient proof during my residence in the countries of the Mediterranean. And I have also been frequently struck by the very favourable impression produced by our services upon persons of other communions. The simplicity and order, as well as the stillness and solemnity, of our worship have been so often mentioned to me with approbation, that I cannot pass over the subject without notice, especially at a time when so many attempts have been made to depreciate our ritual, both at home and abroad.

In the present state of the Christian world, it is

a question of much difficulty and delicacy how we are to conduct ourselves with reference to those Churches and communities among whom we are placed. You are aware that many persons whose minds had been turned towards the restoration of external unity in the visible Church, were desirous that the establishment of an English episcopate in the Mediterranean might be made the occasion of a return to the ancient canons of the Church respecting intercommunion, as they existed before the separation of the East and West. And, doubtless, this was a thing much to be desired if it could have been done without any compromise of principle on our part. But after a careful consideration of the subject I deem it impossible. The divided state of Christendom, both political and religious, the assumptions, pretensions, and corruptions of the Church of Rome, the errors and heresies which prevail in the Eastern world, these and other circumstances combined, have rendered the observance of the ancient canons of the Church, with regard to intercourse and intercommunion, altogether impracticable. In point of fact, these canons are not now completely observed by any Church or community of Christians whatever. However desirable therefore it may be in theory, and however greatly to be wished as an evidence of the external unity of the Church, the actual observance of them on our part alone, cannot in the present state of Christendom be reasonably insisted on. Still it must

be allowed that some general principles must and ought to be followed in our intercourse with those Churches among which our lot is cast. We are a part of the great Christian community, and as a branch of the Church Catholic we can no more act without reference to the general laws of the Church, than as a nation we can act without reference to the general laws of the great community of nations.

It is evident, therefore, that though we cannot act according to the strict requirements of the canons of the ancient Church, with reference to intercourse with other Churches, yet we ought to follow them as nearly as we can in their general principles and bearing. And this in fact has been done by the rulers of our Church, so far as she has yet proceeded in her intercourse with the Churches of the Mediterranean. Upon the appointment of the present bishop of the Church of England in Jerusalem, he was furnished with a letter commendatory from the Archbishop of Canterbury, as primate of all England and metropolitan, to the prelates and bishops of the ancient and apostolical Churches in Syria and the countries adjacent.

In that letter they were informed that the bishop had been charged "not to intermeddle in any way with the jurisdiction of the prelates or other ecclesiastical dignitaries bearing rule in the Churches of the East, but to shew them due reverence and honour; and to be ready on all occasions, and by

all the means in his power, to promote a mutual interchange of respect, courtesy, and kindness."

Previous to this proceeding, I had myself been intrusted, when a presbyter, in the year 1840, with letters commendatory from the Archbishop of Canterbury, and from my diocesan, the Bishop of London, to the prelates and bishops of the Oriental Church, and had been charged with communications to the same effect. And during my late journey to the Levant, I had the opportunity of confirming the same assurances of respect and Christian charity personally to several of the patriarchs and prelates of the Greek and Armenian Churches: and I trust that the relations of amity and good will which have thus been established, will conduce, though it be but in a small degree, to the restoration of those feelings of Christian love, and that desire for unity, which ought to prevail in every branch of the Church of Christ.

With regard to the Church of Rome, it is hardly necessary for me to say, that the same spirit of hostility which has shewn itself toward us ever since the Church of England renounced its jurisdiction, has prevented any such steps from being taken with reference to the prelates of that Church. With regard to intercourse with other Churches, Rome has but one rule; that is, to require first of all submission to its own authority, which is previously assumed to be infallible. And therefore,

even without taking into consideration the important questions of doctrine and worship, no Church which knows the value of its own freedom and independence will think of entering into communion or alliance with her whilst she remains as she is.

But there is no reason why we should not extend to the individual members of that Church, whether clergy or laity, the same feelings of Christian charity which we are required to shew to all. This is what I have always endeavoured to do on my part; and I think myself bound to acknowledge, that in the various places which I have visited in the course of my journeyings, I have met with many instances of courtesy and kindness from them, as well as from the members of other Churches. In this spirit I trust we shall always continue. There is nothing on our side which should prevent pious and enlightened Christians of other Churches from living in peace and harmony with us. Nor indeed is there anything to prevent them from being in Christian communion with us, were they permitted by their own institutions to be so. The fault of separation certainly does not lie with us; for we exact no terms of communion which are contrary to the canons or the practice of the primitive Church. All persons therefore who hold to the doctrine of the primitive Church, and who are otherwise worthy communicants, are entitled to be

admitted to communion with us, to whatever Church they may belong, if they seek and desire it for themselves. But it is necessary that you should be cautious in this matter, both on account of the persons themselves, and on account of the ecclesiastical and civil difficulties which may arise out of it. I have to request that you will make particular enquiries into the character and motives of those who come from other Churches to seek communion with our own; and that you will not admit them without the same qualifications which our Church requires from its own members. In this respect I am desirous that you should act in the very reverse of that spirit which has shewn itself here and in other places, in making proselytes from us to the Church of Rome—a spirit which, in several well-known instances, has exhibited itself in a manner utterly discreditable to any Christian community. Against imitating such examples, I feel that you have no need of caution. It is contrary to the whole spirit of our Church. We have not the least wish or desire to practise the arts of that "cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive." With whatever earnestness we may strive to propagate our views of Divine truth, we have no inclination or disposition to "do evil that good may come." Our hostility to error is open and candid, and we have no desire for compromise or concealment.

But we must take care not to let this feeling lead us into the other extreme. It is impossible for a zealous and enlightened Christian to live in the midst of a mass of error and superstition and ignorance without sometimes having his spirit stirred within him, and without feeling tempted to show his zeal for the truth in a bold and unsparing manner, regardless of consequences and results.

But this is a temptation which we must carefully avoid. We must remember that our own proper work is in the congregations of our own people, and that we are not responsible before God for the souls of those whom He, in the dispensations of his Providence, has committed to the care of others. In the peculiar position in which we are placed, we have as members of an independent branch of Christ's Church two distinct principles to maintain with reference to other branches. The first is, that we are bound to uphold the truth, and to declare it fully both to Churches and to individual Christians. The second is, that we are also bound, both by the general laws of the Church, and by the principle laid down by our metropolitan, not to intermeddle with the rightful jurisdiction of the bishops and clergy of the Churches of the countries where we dwell. You will immediately perceive that the maintenance of both these principles will require the exercise of much discretion. And this is the

point which I am anxious to impress upon your mind.

The course which I myself have followed has been precisely that which I have endeavoured here to lay down. On the one hand I have carefully abstained from all interference with the jurisdiction of the bishops of other Churches: and on the other I have not shunned to declare the truth to any one who has sought it at my hands, nor have I lost any opportunity of declaring it publicly to other communities, where it could be done with prudence and safety. I am quite aware that this is not a course which is likely to meet with the approbation of over-zealous men of any party; but I trust it is one which will commend itself to the understanding of the moderate and right-minded members of our own Church, and that you may be induced to follow it in your respective positions. I think that the course which we are thus pursuing, is one which will eventually bring about much greater results for the cause of pure religion, than any efforts of ill-regulated zeal, however great or by whomsoever directed. The true way of operating effectually upon other Churches for their spiritual benefit, is not that of waging perpetual war with them, but that which has been laid down in the statement respecting Jerusalem, namely, by "presenting to their observation, without forcing upon their acceptance, the pattern of a Church

essentially scriptural in doctrine, and apostolical in discipline."

Till now this course has not been fairly tried. The Church of England has hardly been known in these regions, except as the subject of calumny and misrepresentation. She is only now beginning to show herself in her fair proportions. She finds much difficulty in her onward progress, and very much remains to be done before she can be made perfectly efficient, either for the edification of her own children or for an example to others. The obstacles which stand in our way are chiefly those which arise from want of means for extending the number of chaplains, and for providing churches or places for Divine worship for our lesser flocks which are scattered throughout the whole of the countries of the Mediterranean. As our wants are but little known, I take this opportunity of stating them, in the hope that those of you who are already in possession of those means of grace which we desire to obtain for others may be able to render assistance in carrying on the work.

On turning first towards the coasts of Spain, I find that there are in all the large commercial cities a considerable number of Englishmen settled with their wives and families, totally without the public means of grace. Not a single English chaplain is established throughout Spain. The same may be said of the whole northern coast of Africa, where

we have not a single English clergyman, either as chaplain or missionary. In the Ionian Islands we have but one civil chaplain, to whose support nothing is contributed by the Government, and whose duties are necessarily confined to Corfu. The rest of the islands have nothing to depend on but the occasional assistance of the two military chaplains attached to the English forces.

In Turkey the only places which have any provision made for the spiritual wants of our countrymen under my jurisdiction are Constantinople and Smyrna; and in Greece, Athens and Syra. But there are in all these countries scattered portions of Englishmen, many of whom are extremely desirous to have the ordinances of their religion duly administered to them, and their children instructed in the faith, but who nevertheless are not able to provide for the full maintenance of a clergyman. I have therefore commenced the formation of a diocesan fund, of which the first object is, to give assistance toward the support of chaplains in such places. Another portion of it will be devoted to missionary purposes in the countries of the Mediterranean. I need not tell you how wide a field these purposes open to us, among the various populations of those portions of Europe, Asia, and Africa with which I am necessarily brought into contact. And it is impossible to observe the activity with which error is propagated throughout

these regions, without feeling that it would be criminal in us to remain passive or indolent, or to neglect the promotion of Christian knowledge in the purer form in which we possess it.

I have therefore to request that you will endeavour to assist in these objects, by bringing them before your congregations, either in a sermon, or in any way which may seem best. A contribution annually from each congregation would not only accomplish these objects, but would serve as a bond of union which would mutually strengthen our hands. And in this a beginning has already been made.

The English Church at Oporto, like the Church of Corinth with St. Paul, "was ready a year ago;" and upon the mere mention of these objects contributed liberally toward them. I trust that their zeal may provoke many, and that we may thus find compensation for that total want of endowment, and that great lack of pecuniary resources, which we feel throughout the whole of the diocese and jurisdiction. I have felt myself greatly encouraged by what has already been done by private munificence for this place; and by nothing so much as the erection of this noble house of God in which we are assembled. O that the pious munificence of the royal foundress of this church might find an imitation in some other parts of the great field of labour which lies before us! The progress of

light and truth would then not only become more rapidly accelerated among our own flocks, but among the people of the countries in which we are scattered. For although we do not come among these Churches as claiming or assuming any jurisdiction over them, yet the very setting up of a Church like ours, so free from the prevailing errors of these countries, and so truly liberal in its constitution and government, cannot but have a considerable effect. Indeed, it has already had its effect, notwithstanding the misrepresentations which are propagated and kept up here, respecting the nature and principles of the Church of England.

On the point of misrepresentations, and on the progress of the Church, it seems desirable that I should say a few words before I conclude.

The errors which have hitherto prevailed respecting the nature and principles of the Church of England will, I hope, soon be removed, partly by our personal endeavours and explanations, and partly by the translations of our Liturgy which have been made or are in progress in the various languages of these countries. And the delusion, so common in Roman catholic countries, respecting the instability of the English Church, and the probability of its submission to Rome, will speedily be dispelled by a slight consideration of the facts which are on record respecting its progress.

It appears from the returns made to Parliament,

that during the last twenty years, that is to say, during the rise of the agitation which has caused so much triumph to the adversaries of our Church, more than five hundred new churches have been built in England alone. And if to these we add the churches which have been built in Ireland, and in the colonies and dependencies of the empire, we shall find that more than that number are to be added to the amount.

An increase therefore of at least a thousand churches and congregations has taken place in the Church of England during the twenty years which have elapsed since the year 1824. And the progress in other respects has not been less striking.

Since the commencement of the present century fifteen new English colonial bishopricks have been founded, and three more are almost complete. Two have been added to the Scottish Church; and in the sister Church in America twenty have been formed in the same time; making altogether an increase of about forty. Now we find it stated in Roman catholic accounts, that forty bishopricks have been added to the Church of Rome within nearly the same period, namely, from 1800 to 1842. So that the amount of the increase is nominally nearly equal. But when we take into consideration that Rome has about one-half the Christian world in subjection, the relative progress and advantage is vastly on the side of the Reformed

Episcopal Churches. And this, be it observed, is without reference to those large communities of Christians of the English language and race who dissent from us, both in England and in America, but who are as strongly opposed as we are to the pretensions of the see of Rome.

It will therefore be at once perceived, that all expectations of submission, arising out of the relative progress of the two Churches, must be futile and vain, and that the defection even of a considerable number of the weak-minded or misguided members of a party cannot afford any good ground for such expectations on the one part, or for alarm among the members of our own Church. Such divisions are doubtless very discouraging, and tend greatly to retard the progress of the Church; but I doubt not that they will in the end serve to purify and to elevate the character of our institutions, and will contribute to the advancement of the truth, and to the glory of God.

This, my Brethren, is the great point for which you are to labour, namely, that both by your life and doctrine you may set forth the glory of God, and set forward the salvation of all men. And I exhort you to strive to do this, faithfully, heartily, and indefatigably. Hold firmly and simply to the truths of the Gospel as you are taught them by the Church of which you are Ministers; and teach them to those who are committed to your charge

with the same purity and simplicity. Let your dependence be always upon Him who has promised to be with his servants, even to the end of the world. Resting on Him in simplicity of faith and trust, and guided and strengthened by his Spirit, you will be made able ministers of the new covenant, and you may look forward with joy to the end of your career, in the certain hope of obtaining your everlasting reward.

THE END.

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